

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 8-13 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S. C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Mills (5,964,465). As stated in the Official Action, "Mills relates to a sealing material comprising a tape (24) comprising a plurality of expanded porous polytetrafluoroethylene films (figure 4) and comprising a height and a width, wherein said tape would exhibit a height greater than its width when rolled into an annular gasket (figure 3)." Applicant respectfully disagrees with this characterization of Mills.

The claims of the present application have been amended to clarify the definition of the relationship of the height and width of the laminate. Specifically, with reference to claim 1 and figure 1 of the present application, the "laminated height" H of the laminate is greater than the width F of the laminate. Applicants have discovered that it is critical to have this relationship of the laminated height (support for this amendment is found in the present specification, for example, at page 7, line 17, and page 9, lines 8-17) in order to provide effective sealing once the sealing material is formed in place around a flange, for example, as illustrated in figure 2. By having this particular arrangement of the height in the laminated direction versus the width of the sealing material, the gasket may be applied as shown in figure 2 such that the direction of the lamination is perpendicular to that of the liquid flow.

By contrast, Mills shows construction of a laminate wherein the laminated height (for direct comparison, see figure 4 of Mills and this height is in the vertical direction as depicted) is less than the width of the material. In use, Mills contemplates placing the gasket as shown in figure 3 around a flange, but this results in the direction of the laminates being parallel to that of the liquid flow. Applicants were aware of the Mills application in the development of their product. Specifically, with reference to figures 16 and 17 of the present application and the description at page 3, lines 10-34 of the present specification, the limitations of the construction such as that shown in Mills are discussed.

Because the specific laminated height as defined in the present claim is greater than the width of the sealing material in the present application, and this is not contemplated or suggested by Mills, it cannot be stated that Mills anticipates the present claims. Similarly, to the extent the remaining

dependent claims are rejected based on combinations involving Mills, none of the additional references supply the missing feature of Mills. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of all claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Allan M. Wheatcraft 36,307
W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc.
551 Paper Mill Road
P.O. Box 9206
Newark, DE 19714-9206
(302) 738-4880

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